

Coast 4U Quarterly
Fall 2010 Issue
WHALE TAIL® Grantee Spotlight:
Environmental Traveling Companions

The WHALE TAIL® Grants Program distributes funds from sales of the WHALE TAIL® License Plate. The grants support programs that teach California's children and the general public to value and take action to improve the health of the state's marine and coastal resources. Adopt-A-Beach programs, as well as other beach maintenance and coastal habitat restoration projects that have an educational component, are also eligible for these grants. This grants program focuses on reaching communities that are currently poorly served in terms of marine and coastal education.

Each issue of the Coast 4U Quarterly features one of our WHALE TAIL® Grant-funded projects. This issue we feature Environmental Traveling Companions. For more examples of projects funded by the WHALE TAIL® Grants Program, please visit <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/plate/plgrant.html>. Please read on to hear about Environmental Traveling Companions' unique environmental education and leadership programs serving people with special needs.



Environmental Traveling Companions (ETC) is dedicated to accessible outdoor environmental education and adventure programs to people with vision, hearing, or mobility impairments; developmental disabilities; serious illnesses; and high-risk, economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Its programs include LEAD (Leadership, Environment, Adventure, Diversity) summer courses featuring sea kayaking, boat construction, and environmental stewardship.

A Whale Tail Grant is supporting a fellowship program for eight youth who are alumni of the Youth LEAD summer courses. The fellows will meet every week over eight months and develop their leadership, outdoor, and job readiness skills. They will learn more about watershed ecology, environmental issues, and San Francisco and Tomales Bays. Then they will lead educational sea kayak adventure trips for over 100 other ETC youth with special needs, which will include providing environmental education focused on the ecology of San Francisco Bay.

The fellows will also be building a traditional Aleutian kayak and learning about Russian fur traders and sea otters on the California coast, then developing a living history module to add to all future ETC sea kayaking trips, serving approximately 800 people each year.

To learn more about Environmental Traveling Companions, please visit
<http://www.etctrips.org/>.

